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WHEN HEARTS WERE BRAVE AND TRUE.

By JOHN P. RITTER.

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CHAPTER IX. CAUGHT IN A TRAP.

We left Edward Roblin mounting guard at the head of the attic stairs. He could see lights moving about in the house below him and hear the hoarse cries of the bandits as they ran from chamber to chamber in search of plunder.

Presently a terrified scream informed him that they had discovered the hiding place of old Caleb Shurker and were dragging him forth to make him surrender his hoard. He was pleading piteously for mercy as they forced him to accompany them to their chief. With blows, curses and insults the ruffians drove him before them until they reached the lawn in front of the dwelling where Claudius Smith was awaiting them.

Roblin now left his post and approached one of the dormer windows.

Looking down from this coign of vantage, he descried the shadowy forms of the outlaws grouped around the person of their chief, who was standing under the branches of an apple tree sternly questioning his quaking prisoner. He could hear the hoarse bass of the bandit and the quavering treble of his victim alternating in inquiries and replies, but just what passed between them it was impossible to make out. All at once the bandit shouted angrily:

"Blame my eyes, what a stubborn fool ye be! If ye'll not tell where the gold is hid, why, then, ye must hang that's all. Then, turning to his men, he asked quickly, 'Have any of ye got a rope?'"

The suggestion acted upon the passions of the ruffians like a spark applied to gunpowder.

"Hang the rebel! Swing him up!" they yelled, crowding around the prisoner and shaking their fists in his face.

One of them ran off quickly and soon returned with a stout cord. A running noose was made at one end of it and thrown over the prisoner's head. Then he was hurried beneath the apple tree.

"Now, my lads, swing him up!" commanded the Tory chieftain.

An indescribable uproar followed these words. Roblin could see nothing but a struggling mass of men surging around the prisoner, whose body presently shot up above their heads, dangling at the end of a rope. But he was not permitted to witness the end of the tragedy, for at that moment he heard the sound of footsteps upon the attic stairs.

Instantly divining that some skulking Tories had left their comrades to come hither and plunder in secret, he ran to the head of the flight and, picking up his saber, awaited their appearance through the opening. He was just in time, for the next instant the first of the bandits reached the top of the steps. He was in the act of passing into the attic when he received such a rap on the scone from Roblin's saber that he plunged headlong to the floor below, where he lay like one dead. This had the effect of dampening the ardor of his comrades.

Peering through the opening, Roblin observed that they hesitated, consulted together and then beat a hasty retreat. He heard them running down rapidly through the house and knew that they had gone to bring others to their assistance. Although he realized that he had no hope of successfully withstanding the odds that would be brought into requisition, he determined to defend Zedie to the last. He fully believed that the outcome of the struggle would be death. Nevertheless this did not deprive him of his courage.

While he was waiting the return of the Tories the girl regained her senses. "Where am I?" she moaned feebly. Roblin hastened to her side.

"Be still, Zedie!" he whispered, bending over her. "Your safety depends upon it. It must not be known that you have taken refuge here."

"Yes, yes, I know now," she moaned sadly. "The Tories have broken into the house. They are after my husband's gold. Oh, poor, poor Caleb! If they deprive him of his money, it will kill him."

Suddenly the stairs resounded to the tread of many footsteps, accompanied by confused shouts and the rattle of steel against steel. The Tories were approaching. Some of them were carrying torches whose light already penetrated the darkness of the loft.

Hastening back to his post, Roblin could see them hurrying toward the stairs like a pack of hungry wolves. When they reached the bottom of the flight, he drew back into the shadow and waited.

Presently a flaming torch was protruded through the door, followed by a ferocious face searching the darkness. Roblin swung his saber and the rash intruder fell backward down the steps, carrying two comrades with him. The crash of their fall was followed by a few seconds of profound silence, during which Roblin stood over the opening with uplifted weapon, ready to strike down the next Tory who might be bold enough to show his head. Then the stillness was broken by a hoarse voice, mingling strange oaths with direful threats.

It was the voice of Claudius Smith. "Out of my way! Make room!" he roared, pushing his comrades to the

right and left as he strode toward the steps.

One of the Tories pointed to the opening into the attic.

"There's an armed devil yonder," he said, "and ye'd better not go near him."

"Coward! Poltroon!" shrieked his chieftain, beside himself with fury. "D'y'e think I fear man, God, or devil?" Blind with rage, he leaped upon the steps and mounted them with the agility of a tiger. As his head came through the floor Roblin struck at it savagely with his saber.

Steel rang against steel, sparks scintillated in the darkness, and the weapon flew out of Roblin's hand. It had glanced off the blade of the saber with which the outlaw had been shrewd enough to cover his attack.

The Tory chieftain sprang into the attic triumphant. He saw in the gloom the form of a man crouching away from him and raised his saber aloft to deal a deathblow. The next instant the blade cut a gleaming swath in the air and descended swiftly.

The blow was well intended: never-



A flaming torch was protruded through the door.

theless it missed its mark, for as he was in the act of delivering it a Tory rushed precipitately into the attic and jostled against him. At the same instant the sharp report of firearms, the clash of swords, cries of terror and shouts of triumph arose in a deafening tumult from below. Another Tory came tumbling into the loft.

"We are betrayed!" he shouted in tones that quavered with fear. "Run, captain, run, for the Americans have surrounded the house!"

Then he and his comrade scurried away in the darkness and concealed themselves in the lumber that littered the attic. Their chief stood at the head of the stairs, looking down upon the tumultuous scene below like one petrified. The light of the torches, borne hither and thither by his men as they fought to escape from their assailants, threw fitful gleams upon his countenance, and Roblin could see that it had turned a hideous, livid hue from baffled rage and despair.

Presently a deep voice thundered above the din.

"Claudius Smith is in the loft! Up and at him, men! Give the outlaw no quarter!"

At this Claudius uttered a defiant laugh.

"Aye, but ye must catch me first, ye blasted rebels!" he growled between his teeth.

Then he turned and ran quickly toward one of the dormer windows. Scarcely had he reached it when there was an onrush of footsteps on the narrow stairs, and a number of furious frontiersmen sprang one after another into the loft, where they scattered and began searching the lumber and rubbish for the bandit chief. Presently one of them caught sight of him as he was in the act of crawling through the dormer window. With a shout of exultation he hurried after him, arriving at the window just in time to see the fugitive scramble nimbly down the sloping roof to the gutter, swing himself to the veranda below, slide down one of its pillars and escape across the lawn to the place where his horse was tethered.

In the meantime Roblin had narrowly escaped death at the hands of the other assailants. On their first coming into the attic they had passed him by unnoticed, and he had since been too much bewildered by the strange events transpiring before him to pay much heed to their movements. Indeed while they were searching the loft for the Tory chief he was engaged in administering to Zedie, who had relapsed into unconsciousness when Claudius swung his saber at her defender. The frontiersmen came upon him while he was chafing the hands and temples of the girl with the idea of restoring her to her senses and, setting upon him furiously, would have dispatched him in the darkness had he not warned them quickly that he was not an enemy.

"Hold, my fine fellows!" he cried. "Would you slay a true American?"

At this they dropped their weapons, and one of them lit a torch and held it

close to his face. For a moment he scrutinized the young man's countenance keenly. Then he broke out into a cry of amazement.

"By the powers above, it's Edward Roblin!"

The young man glanced quickly at the speaker, and his heart sank within him, for he found himself face to face with his relentless persecutor, Farmer Price.

CHAPTER X.

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

It was fortunate for Roblin that at this moment Zedie came out of her swoon, for Farmer Price had flown into a towering rage on recognizing her former lover. He had learned of his escape from jail, accompanied by Joe Westbrook's pretty daughter, and had heard it darkly hinted that they had taken refuge with the Tories in the mountains, and now he jumped at the conclusion that Roblin had led the Tories hither for the purpose of carrying off his daughter. It would be an effectual way of wreaking his revenge, he argued, and at the same time procuring plunder for his comrades.

"You infernal desperado!" he bawled loudly. "So you thought to run off with Zedie, after all! Oh, never fear, we'll not kill you, for it would be a shame to rob the gallows of its prey! No, you thieving varlet! We'll put you back in prison and keep you there until the hangman calls for you. That's what we'll do."

Roblin glared at his persecutor defiantly and replied:

"Whatever I may be, old man, I am not a perjurer! I never kept a man in jail on a false charge. And, as for wishing to steal your daughter, I have risked my life to protect her."

"Yes, indeed," broke in Zedie, who had at last found voice to interpose. "this man has defended me bravely without letting me know who he was." Then, turning to Roblin, she continued in a sorrowful tone of voice: "So it was you, Edward, who so bravely defended me from the Tories. Strange that I did not guess it before!"

While she was speaking her father gazed at her in bewilderment, for her words had a cooling effect upon his rage.

"You say that this man defended you, Zedie?" he stammered out at last. "Yes, father," she answered eagerly. "He fought the whole band for my sake."

"But he came here with the Tories. He was one of them," returned Farmer Price dubiously.

"I can explain all that," broke in a sweet voice from the direction of the staircase.

And a moment afterward Polly came tripping into the attic.

She carried a lantern in her hand, and her countenance was illumined by its light. It could be seen that her cheeks were flushed with excitement and that an expression of triumph glittered in her eyes.

"Come," she said gayly, beckoning to the group surrounding Roblin. "Follow me into the kitchen, and I will tell the story of this night's doings. The Tories have fled to the mountains and we need not fear disturbance."

"But my husband—Caleb—has he escaped unharmed?" asked Zedie in a tone of voice which suggested the suspicion that a negative answer would not have broken her heart.

"Mr. Shurker has been brutally maltreated," answered Polly, "but he will soon be himself again. I will tell you all about him when we reach the kitchen."

"Thank you," returned Zedie faintly, with just a trace of disappointment in her tone.

So they all followed Polly into the kitchen, where the remainder of the rescuing party were already gathered, resting from the fatigues of the battle and administering to the needs of Caleb Shurker. For, as Polly had said, this unfortunate man had been very roughly treated by the bandits and was much nearer dead than alive.

While passing down the stairs from the attic into the lower part of the house they stumbled over the bodies of several Tories who had been thrown into such a panic by the sudden onrush of the rescuers that they had scarcely raised a hand in defense of their lives. Evidences were nowhere wanting that the surprise had been complete. On reaching the kitchen Polly bade the others be seated, while Zedie, like a dutiful wife, went over to soothe and console her moaning husband. Farmer Price, who was familiar with the domestic arrangements of the household, brought a great jug of cider from the cellar and also a store of more substantial refreshments. These he placed on the table, saying:

"Fall to, my lads, and eat and drink your fill. Ye'll find that cider most excellent and the corn bread and bacon very strengthening."

The frontiersmen did not wait for a second invitation, but fell to with a will, and while they were disposing of the eatables Polly told the story of her ride.

"Thank you, kind friends," she began, "for the service you have rendered me this night. Perhaps you are not aware of the great obligations you have placed me under. Well, listen, and I will tell you!"

"This man," pointing proudly at Edward Roblin, "was a captive with me in the mountains. I had helped him to escape from the jail in which he was wrongfully confined, and we had fled together to get married and begin life over again in another part of the world. But unfortunately we were induced to accept the protection of Claudius Smith. He promised to see that we

were married and offered us a retreat with his outlaws until the ceremony was performed. But we soon found that we were his prisoners. He kept a guard placed over us and deprived us of our liberty, and so it happened that we were in a position to become acquainted with his designs."

"This morning," she continued, "he returned after a long absence to his camp and, after resting until late in the day, called a council of his officers to lay the plans for this night's raid. Realizing that he was up to some mischief, I crept up to their place of meeting, listened to what they said, and so became acquainted with their purposes, and then I determined to outwit them. As Edward Roblin was forced to accompany the Tories on their raid I was compelled to undertake the task alone. But fortunately I had an accomplice to help me."

At this point in her narrative Polly blushed and cast a confused glance toward her lover. He reassured her with a smile, and she resumed as follows:

"It will be unnecessary to narrate how I succeeded in procuring a horse and making my escape from the Tory camp. My ride to your homes to enlist your help is known to you all, but there are some among us," she added, looking in turn toward Roblin, Zedie and Caleb Shurker, "who are ignorant of the gallant manner in which you responded to my appeals for help and of the bravery you displayed in effecting their rescue. As I am sure they will be interested in the story I will tell it for their benefit."

She then gave a vivid account of the desperate ride of the rescuing party to reach the Shurker farmhouse in time.

"When we were nearing the end of our journey," she continued, "we saw a man riding slowly along the highway ahead of us. At first he was disposed to put spurs to his horse and escape us, but he soon realized the impossibility of doing this. So he drew rein and tremblingly awaited our approach. When we drew up to him, I asked him to join our band."

"What for?" he asked.

"To rescue Caleb Shurker from the Tories," I replied.

"What," he exclaimed in surprise, "and is Claudius Smith really after the old man's treasure? Why, I'm Caleb Shurker's father-in-law, and if what you say is true I will go along with your party most willingly. Indeed I was on my way to Shurker's when you fell in with me."

"So Mr. Price joined our party," went on Polly, "and we continued on our way. As we drew near the farmhouse we heard a loud commotion. It seemed as if a thousand devils were screaming all at once. Then we knew that the Tories were plundering the dwelling and that we had no time to spare if we wished to prevent murder."

So we put our horses to their utmost speed and dashed on to the end of our journey. We arrived in the nick of time, for as we dashed in among the bandits we saw Mr. Shurker's body dangling from the limb of an apple tree. We immediately cut the poor man down and removed the cord from his neck. Fortunately, at the time we made our attack Claudius Smith and half his band of outlaws were in the house endeavoring to reach the attic, where Edward Roblin was defending Zedie. This made it an easy matter to overpower them. We put the rogues who were torturing Mr. Shurker to flight and afterward surprised the bandits in the farmhouse. I believe we killed quite a number, but unfortunately Claudius Smith and his son, Richard, made their escape. However, my friends," she concluded, making a graceful courtesy to the rough frontiersmen, "you have helped me accomplish my purpose, and I thank you once more for your gallantry."

With these words she smiled sweetly upon the company and, gliding quickly across the apartment, sat down by the side of her lover.

For a moment the profoundest silence reigned in that crowded room. Then Farmer Price, who had been deeply impressed by the heroic girl's narrative, made his way to where Roblin was sitting and grasped him warmly by the hand.

"I hope ye will forgive me, Edward," he said in tones of deep emotion. "for I have done ye a grievous wrong. But I will make amends for it, my lad, rest assured. If ye wish to



"I hope ye will forgive me, Edward," marry this brave lass, my boy. I'll put ye in the way of doing it. If ye'll let bygones be bygones, Edward, ye can both come and live with me."

"But I thought I was in your debt, sir," answered Roblin, with a scornful laugh. "At least I was imprisoned on that account, was I not?"

Farmer Price hung his head in confusion.

"The good book tells us, Edward, to forgive those who despitefully use us," he said humbly. "I am sorry for the harm I have done ye, lad, and am anxious to make amends for it."

The poor man's humiliation moved Polly's heart to pity.

"Forgive him, Edward," she whispered. "Please do it for my sake."

So Roblin, who could deny her nothing, generously forgave his persecutor. Indeed the night ended most happily for all concerned excepting the unfortunate Zedie. She, poor girl, was miserable, for, although she had abandoned her old sweetheart, she still loved him as of old.

It is asserted by the historians of the region that the hero of this narrative never deserted the standard of Claudius Smith after he had been obliged to join it. They claim that he lived with Polly Westbrook in the mountains and became the most active of his captain's lieutenants. In fact, they would have us believe that when Claudius Smith was captured and hanged at Goshen and his band of outlaws were dispersed Roblin and Polly took refuge in Canada, where they ended their days in obscurity.

According to a well authenticated tradition, however, they performed the services narrated in this chronicle and ended their days in happiness in a land they so nobly served. It is probable that the historians of the region have confounded Roblin's career with that of Polly Westbrook's outlaw lover, Richard Smith. It is a well known fact that this outlaw was only second to his father in ferocity, and that he ended his days in Canada a fugitive from the laws of his country.

In conclusion it may be well to say a few words concerning the fate of poor Zedie Price, as they may serve as a warning to lovers to remain faithful to their plighted troth. It is said that Caleb Shurker turned out to be a fraud, after all, and that his reputed wealth was chimerical. He treated his young wife cruelly, so that she was at last obliged to leave him and return to her father's home, where the sight of her old lover's happiness with his wife, Polly Westbrook, caused her to go into a decline. She died of a broken heart.

THE END.

Miscellaneous Reading.

OUR DUTY IN THE PHILIPPINES.

W. J. Bryan Makes an Argument That Is Unanswerable.

In the New York Independent of last Wednesday, Hon. W. J. Bryan discusses the Philippine question. He says:

"The declaration of independence asserts that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, and this is the doctrine to which we have adhered for more than a century. It is the doctrine which has distinguished us from European countries and has made our nation the hope of humanity. The statue in New York harbor typifies the nation's mission."

"If the doctrine set forth in the declaration of independence is sound, how can we rightfully acquire sovereignty over the Filipinos by a war of conquest. If the doctrine set forth in the declaration of independence is sound, how can we rightfully purchase sovereignty from a Spanish sovereign whose title we disputed in Cuba and whose rebellious subjects we armed in the Philippines?"

"In the resolution of intervention congress declared that the Cubans were, and of right ought to be, free. Why? Because governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, and Spain had refused to respect the wishes of the Cubans. If the Cubans were and of right ought to be free, why not the Filipinos?"

"In the beginning of the Spanish war congress denied that our nation had any thought of extending its territory by war. If we then had no thought of securing by conquest new territory in the western hemisphere, why should we now talk of securing in the eastern hemisphere new races for subjugation?"

"An individual may live a double life when only one life is known. When both lives are known he can lead only one life and the worst. A republic cannot enter upon a colonial policy. It cannot advocate government by consent at home and government by force abroad. The declaration of independence will lose its value when we proclaim the doctrine familiar in Europe but detestable here, that governments are round in shape, about 13 inches in diameter and fired out of a cannon."

"For more than a century this nation has been traveling along the pathway which leads from the low domain of might to the lofty realm of right, and its history has been without a parallel in the annals of recorded time. What will be our fate if we turn backward and begin the descent toward force and conquest?"

"It is not sufficient to say that the forcible annexation of the Philippine islands is a benevolent undertaking entered upon for the good of the Filipinos. Lincoln pointed out that this has always been the argument of kings. To use his words, 'they always bestrode the neck of the people, not that they wanted to do it, but because the people were better off for being ridden.'"

"It is surprising that any believer in

self-government should favor forcible annexation; but more surprising that any one who believes in the Christian religion should favor the substitution of force for reason in the extension of our nation's influence."

"If we adopt the gunpowder gospel in the Philippines how long will it be before that principle will be transplanted in American soil. So long as our arguments are addressed to the reason and heart our progress is sure, but can we, without danger to Christianity, resort to the ancient plan of injecting religion into the body through bullet holes?"

"The question is frequently asked, 'What can we do?' Nearly two months elapsed between the signing of the treaty and the beginning of hostilities in the Philippines. During that time the president and congress might have given to the Filipinos some assurances of independence that was given to the Cubans. Such assurance would have prevented bloodshed. If the doctrine of self-government is sound the Filipinos are entitled to govern themselves, and the president can now promise them independence as soon as a stable government can be established."

"If the president is not willing to take the responsibility of enforcing the doctrine set forth in the declaration of independence, he can call congress together and let them take the responsibility. A special session would be less expensive than the war, not to speak of the principles involved."

"Our nation is protecting the republics of South America from outward interference while they work out their destiny. We can extend the same doctrine to the Philippines, and, having rescued the inhabitants from a foreign yoke, we can guard them from molestation while they develop a republic in the Orient. They will be our friends instead of our enemies. We can send school teachers to Manila instead of soldiers, and the world will know that there is a reality in the theory of government promulgated at Independence Hall and defended by the blood of the Revolutionary fathers."

HENS NEED TO HUSTLE.

There Is Said to Be Quite a Shortage in the Egg Supply.

Unless the hens get to hustling there will be a famine in the egg market. During the past six months there has been a decided falling off in the crop, and just now the supply in the northern markets is not equal to the demand. Higher prices are expected and dealers throughout the country are gathering what eggs they can to be shipped north.

While the demand for eggs is constantly increasing, the supply shows a disappointing decrease. The speculative element in the market is in consequence expecting higher price while the trade in general is only striving to keep up the supply.

Last year's receipts on the New York markets were over 90,000,000 dozen, but the receipts for the first six months of this year shows a decided falling off.

New York is the largest egg market in the world, and last year handled over \$18,000,000 worth of eggs, figured at the average retail price of 20 cents.

The calico prints interests use, it is roughly estimated, over 40,000,000 dozen eggs annually, while the coffee roasters, the photographic trades, the cracker and biscuit combines, and the chemical trades consume twice as many. In fact, the grocer is today compelled to compete in the general market against buyers from a dozen manufacturing interests. The leather product trades are also extensive users of eggs for tanning and refining purposes, as are also the several patent food concerns. Wine and liquor jobbers find the egg indispensable in "finishing" and in fact, when all the other interests have been supplied the grocer is indeed fortunate if he gets what he needs.

England last year imported over \$20,000,000 worth of eggs, but the American egg had hardly any representation in these millions of cases. French, German and especially Canadian eggs reached the English market, to the exclusion of the American article. This is principally due, says the leading dealers, to the fact that under the present tariff, Canada being unable to ship eggs into this country, sends them to Europe. Under these conditions, even if the American supply was in great excess of the demand, which it has never been, competition with Canada would be out of the question.

THE IRONY OF FATE.—A good story is being circulated at the expense of a Laurens merchant who would not patronize a home enterprise. The Laurens Canning factory, one of the most successful concerns in the state, ships its goods to all parts of the country, but the merchant in question persistently refused to place his order with it because it was a local concern, whose goods were not, as he thought, of the quality he desired to handle. Recently, the story goes, he placed an order with a New York house, giving them instructions to send the best canned goods in the house. When the goods came the merchant, to his surprise, learned that they were goods from the Laurens factory, put up within half a mile of his store. Aside from the freight, he paid considerably more for the goods than they would have cost him at Laurens. Moral—Patron home industry.—Columbia Record.